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Breast Cancer Remains Critical Health Issue for Women

Wisconsin Well Woman Program Helps Provide Access to Screening Services for Early Diagnosis

Eau Claire, WI October 15, 2015— Thirty years after the first National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, held in October 1985, the disease remains second only to lung cancer in the number of cancer deaths in women, according to state health officials.

The American Cancer Society estimates there will be more than 4,300 new cases of breast cancer and more than 700 deaths from breast cancer in Wisconsin this year.

The main factors that influence your risk of breast cancer include sex, age (most breast cancers are found in women who are 50 years old or older), family history, and inherited genetic changes.

“Today, we know much more about this disease, including the importance of regular breast cancer screenings to catch the disease early and get women into treatment sooner,” said State Health Officer Karen McKeown.

To help accomplish this goal, the Department of Health Services [Wisconsin Well Woman Program](#) provides breast and cervical cancer screenings statewide to eligible women aged 45 through 64.

“While many women now have access to breast and cervical cancer screenings through private health insurance or BadgerCare Plus, our program is committed to providing these life-saving screening services for women who continue to need them,” said McKeown. Low-income women historically have not accessed early detection and treatment services as frequently as other women.

Data shows that the percent of women age 50+ that report having a mammogram in the past 2 years in Eau Claire County was lower than that of the state percentage. Lieske Giese, director of the Eau Claire City-County Health Department states, “Although the Affordable Care Act requires that insurance companies offer preventive screening, there will continue to be women without health insurance. The Well Woman Program is another option for these women. We want to see access to preventive screening available to all.”

The Eau Claire City-County Health Department provides coordination of the Well Woman Program for Eau Claire and 7 surrounding counties: Chippewa, Dunn, Jackson, Pepin, Pierce, Trempealeau, and St. Croix. To learn more about the program or the eligibility requirements, contact the local Wisconsin Well Woman Program coordinator at 715-839-4718 or visit the Eau Claire County [Wisconsin Well Woman Program website](#).

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